Memory;80
FROM DAY ONE, OUR TRIP TO LUFEN WAS FILLED TO BURSTING.

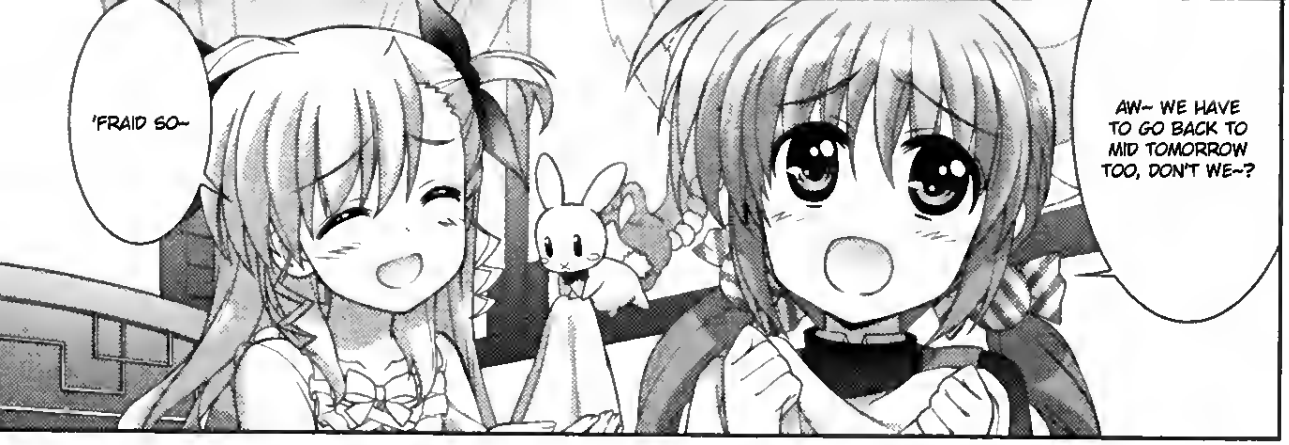
ON THE SECOND DAY WE DROPPED IN ON THE FIST OF THE LUSTROUS HUANG DOJO, WHERE THEY ALLOWED US TO OBSERVE AND PARTICIPATE IN THEIR TRAINING REGIMEN.

THANKS TO THAT, IT APPEARS SIEG-SAN'S RESEARCH AND COUNTERMEASURES FOR LUFEN MARTIAL ARTS WENT SWIMMINGLY.
REALLY, THANKS, IRENE~
AND, AS TWO OF THE "RULING CLASS", THEY EVEN DEVELOPED A BURGEONING FRIENDSHIP!
NOT AT ALL! I WISH YOU LUCK, SIEG.

MICAIAH-SAN WAS ALSO ABLE TO INDULGE IN HER STUDY OF SWORD TECHNIQUES BY CHECKING OUT THE BOOKS OF SECRETS.
WE SHOWED IX AROUND TO ALL KINDS OF SCENERY.

OKAY, I'LL... THINK ABOUT IT...
YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY LET YOUR HAIR GROW OUT! I GUARANTEE YOU'D BE GORGEOUS~! COME ON, I'M BEGGING YOU~!
AND NOVE BECAME RINNA-SAN'S DRESS-UP DOLL FOR AWHILE...

THE THREE DAYS OF OUR STAY PASSED IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE.


'FRAID SO~
AW~ WE HAVE TO GO BACK TO MID TOMORROW TOO, DON'T WE~?

I'M NOT SURE WHY I GOT DRAGGED INTO THE TRAINING TOO, BUT... EH, IT WAS STILL FUN.
I GOT A LOT OF TRAINING IN TOO!
BUT IT WAS A VERY FULFILLING TRAINING CAMP.

...ME?
?

SURE! WHAT'S UP?
OH, VIVIO. GOT A SECOND?

APPARENTLY GRAMPS WANTS TO TALK TO YOU AND CHRIS ABOUT SOMETHING. COULD YOU HEAD OVER THERE NOW?

Memory:80
★ [Domain] ★

SORRY TO CALL YOU AND YOUR RABBIT OUT LIKE THIS, VIVIO-JOUCHAN.
IT'S FINE~
ADDING ON THE "JOUCHAN" MAKES IT A BIT LONG. SINCE YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH MY GRANDDAUGHTER, WOULD YOU MIND IF I JUST CALLED YOU BY NAME?
PLEASE, BY ALL MEANS!
VERY WELL THEN. VIVIO.
SIR!
SEEING YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS SO DILIGENTLY PURSUING YOUR PATHS ON THE ROAD OF MARTIAL ARTS BRINGS A SMILE TO MY FACE.
HOWEVER, I HAVE TO WONDER IF YOU'VE NOTICED IT YET YOURSELF.

IT'S A PROBLEM OF TALENT... ISN'T IT?
YOUR INNATE ABILITIES ARE THE PRIMARY CONCERN, YES.
THAT THE PATH YOU MUST TAKE IF YOU WISH TO PROGRESS AS A MARTIAL ARTIST WILL BE CONSIDERABLY DIFFICULT.
IF YOU'RE JUST DOING THIS FOR FUN, THAT'S FINE. BUT IF YOU WANT TO AIM HIGHER, IT WILL BE A ROUGH CLIMB. YOUR EFFORTS MAY NOT BE REWARDED.
CORONA-JOUCHAN HAS WEAPONS IN THE FORM OF HER GOLEM AND BODY MANIPULATION. RIO, AS MY GRANDDAUGHTER, WAS BLESSED WITH BOTH MAGICAL AND PHYSICAL STRENGTH.
BUT YOU, VIVIO, SINGLE-MINDEDLY PURSUE HAND-TO-HAND MARTIAL ARTS WITH YOUR SLENDER ARMS AND SHALLOW MAGICAL RESERVES. YOUR RABBIT HELPS, I'M SURE, BUT... IT MUST STILL BE VERY DIFFICULT.
I COULD GO ON, BUT I'M SURE YOU'RE AWARE OF THE PHYSIQUES AND TALENTS OF THE OTHER GIRLS AS WELL. THEY ARE ALL WALKING THE PATHS BEFITTING THEIR ABILITIES.

THERE ARE OTHER COMPETITIONS THAT COULD MAKE USE OF YOUR HAND-EYE COORDINATION AND INSTANTANEOUS FORCE, YOU KNOW?
EVEN IF YOU'RE FIXATED ON COMBAT SPORTS, PICKING UP A WEAPON WOULD MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE. A SWORD COULD WORK, BUT YOU'D BE ESPECIALLY SUITED TO A SPEAR.

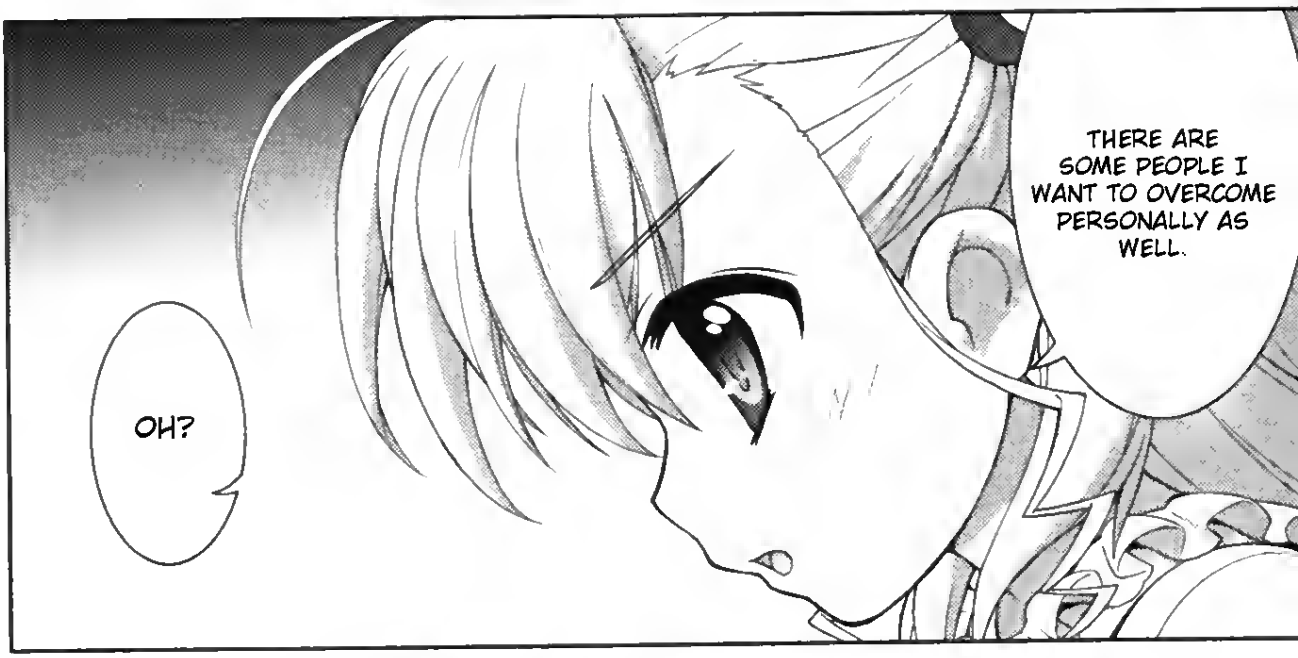
BUT I REALLY LOVE HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT... I WANT TO KEEP FIGHTING WITH THESE FISTS.

I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN.

FIRST OF ALL... MY MARTIAL ARTS ARE A "PRODUCT" OF NOVE'S COACHING.
WELL...
IS THERE A REASON FOR YOUR FIXATION?
THAT'S WHY WE'VE ALWAYS FOUGHT TOGETHER.
BECAUSE OF THE BODY SHE WAS BORN WITH, NO MATTER WHAT GRADE OF BELT OR TRAINING QUALIFICATIONS SHE EARNS, SHE'D NEVER BE ABLE TO ENTER AN ACTUAL MATCH.
I WORK TO BRING TO LIFE NOVE'S IMAGE OF THE IDEAL HAND-TO-HAND FIGHTER...

A COUNTER HITTER THAT CAN OVERCOME A STAGE DOMINATED BY STRIKERS THROUGH SKILL ALONE.
I'M SURE THAT I CAN WIN, WEAK AS I AM... WITH THIS STYLE DESIGNED FOR SOMEONE UNFIT TO PRACTICE HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT...
BECAUSE THE TWO OF US DARE TO DREAM.

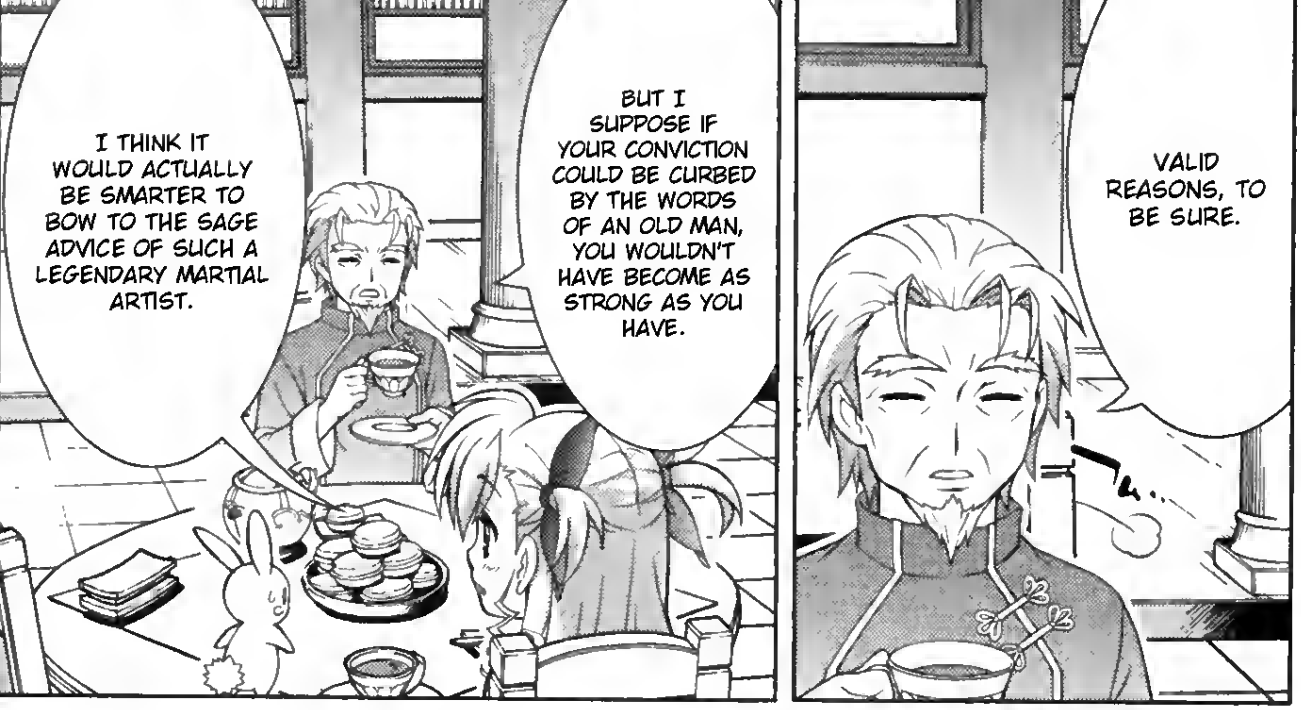
YOUR BOND WITH YOUR COACH IS CERTAINLY A BEAUTIFUL THING, BUT...
OF COURSE, THAT'S NOT THE ONLY REASON.
CHRIS AND I DECIDED THAT WE'D CONTINUE TO AIM HIGHER, WITHOUT GIVING UP, AS LONG AS NOVE DOES AS WELL.


THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE I WANT TO OVERCOME PERSONALLY AS WELL.
OH?

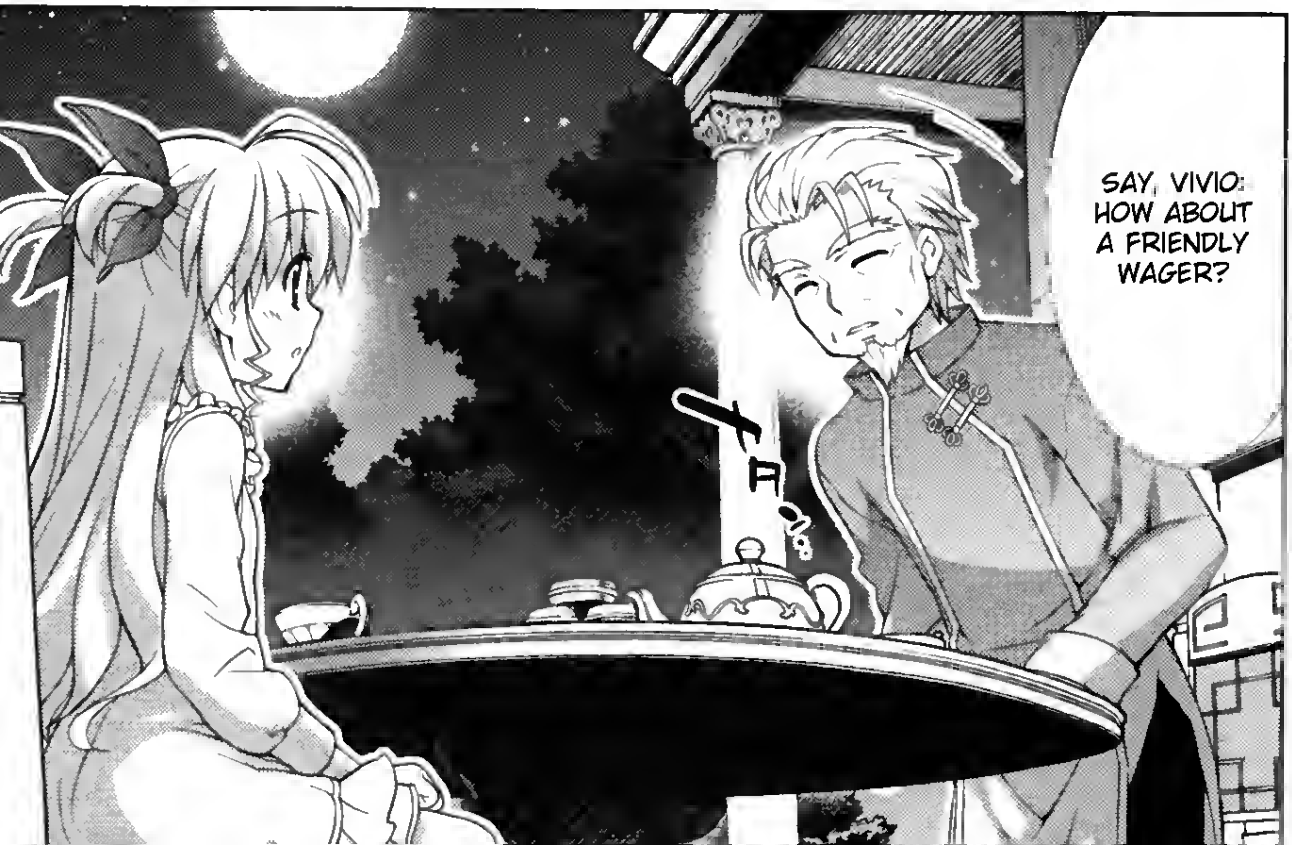
MARTIAL ARTISTS?
AH, WELL, THEY'RE NOT MARTIAL ARTISTS, BUT... THEY'RE ABOUT AS STRONG AS AN OGRE OR A DEMON LORD.

A WOMAN THAT CAN OVERCOME ANY ADVERSITY WITH COURAGE AND STRENGTH... AND A GENTLE WOMAN FASTER AND MORE CLEVER THAN ANYONE ELSE.
WELL, I'M TALKING ABOUT MY MOTHERS.

THEY RAISED ME WITH THE HOPES THAT I WOULD GROW UP STRONG IN BOTH BODY AND SPIRIT.
AS IF THEY WERE BRINGING ME UP TO OVERCOME THEM WITH MY OWN FISTS.
AND THAT'S WHY I REFUSE TO GIVE UP ON THIS.
SOUNDS LIKE QUITE THE HAPPY HOME~
ALL~ RIGHT, MAMA'S NOT GOING TO LOSE~!
ESPECIALLY SO THEY COULD BEAT OUT REAL MOTHERS!


I THINK IT WOULD ACTUALLY BE SMARTER TO BOW TO THE SAGE ADVICE OF SUCH A LEGENDARY MARTIAL ARTIST.
BUT I SUPPOSE IF YOUR CONVICTION COULD BE CURBED BY THE WORDS OF AN OLD MAN, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BECOME AS STRONG AS YOU HAVE.
VALID REASONS, TO BE SURE.

UUGH...
EVEN IF I HOLD THE POSITION OF A MENTOR, IT IS NOT MY PLACE TO CHOOSE THE PATHS YOUNG TALENT SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT PURSUE.


SAY, VIVIO: HOW ABOUT A FRIENDLY WAGER?

I'D LIKE YOU TO PUT A LITTLE THOUGHT INTO WHERE YOU'RE HEADED.
HOWEVER, IF YOU GET SCARED AND BACK DOWN OR CLOSE YOUR EYES
I'LL COME AT YOU WITH THREE SEPARATE BLOWS.
...OKAY...!
OF COURSE, I WON'T ACTUALLY HIT YOU, SO I DON'T WANT YOU TO DODGE AWAY FROM OR UNDER THEM. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN AND SEE THEM THROUGH.

YES SIR!
NOW, TAKE YOUR STANCE. WE'LL START A LITTLE LIGHT. ALL RIGHT?

EH...

EVEN THOUGH HE WAS THAT FAR AWAY... I DIDN'T SEE A THING!
I MISSED IT!
CHRIS... CONTACT MODE!
NOW THEN, READY FOR THE NEXT ONE? I WON'T BE STOPPING SO FAR AWAY THIS TIME.
EEK!
EH!? EEH!? NO WAY!? SCARY, SCARY, SCARY!

ALL RIGHT, LAST ONE.
N... NO...
OOH. I GOT A BIT OF A REACTION THAT TIME, EH?
I SCREAMED BECAUSE I STILL FELT THE FORCE OF THAT KICK! IF HE HADN'T MISSED, IT WOULD'VE TAKEN MY HEAD OFF...
IF THIS ONE ENDS UP HITTING YOU, WELL...
I AM STARTING TO FEEL MY AGE, THOUGH.
I hope you'll forgive me?

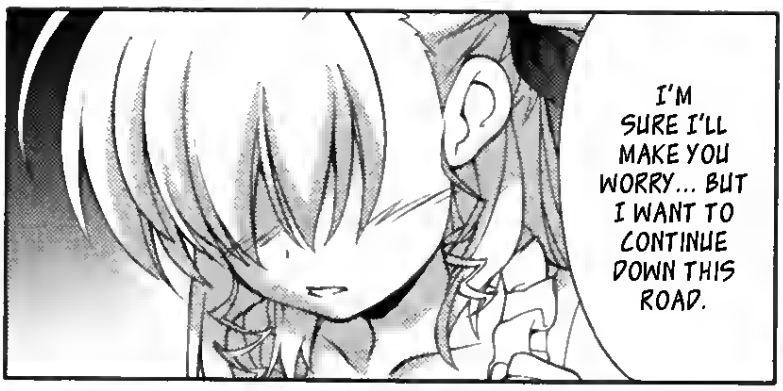
AH...

THIS ATTACK
IT'S NOT GOING TO MISS.
Her natural hand-eye coordination and reflexes and the abilities to read the situation and predict attacks that she's continued to hone.
With the fear of death bearing down on her, Vivio's senses are pushed to their absolute limits.

IF I DON'T DODGE, I'LL DIE.
When the answer appears before her, Vivio's life begins to flash before her eyes.
Memories of days spent in gentle warmth and comfort.
That feeling wells up from behind her. If she takes but a half step back, she can return to those days.
A peaceful home where her two mothers await her return.

Stretching before her is the terror of death. She can't see what lies beyond in the murky depths.
VIVIO ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUSH YOURSELF SO HARD... I JUST WANT TO SEE YOU SMILING.

...I'M SORRY, MAMA ...
However


I'M SURE I'LL MAKE YOU WORRY... BUT I WANT TO CONTINUE DOWN THIS ROAD.

THE PATH AHEAD MAY BE DARK, BUT I HAVE A DESTINATION

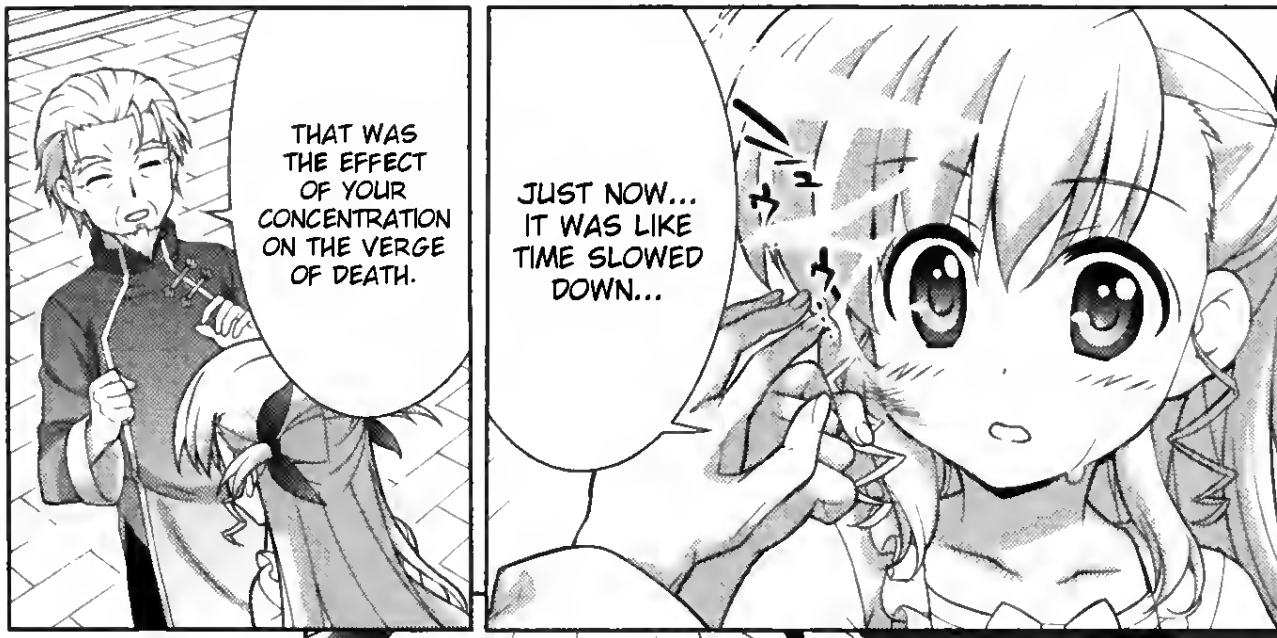
VIVIO...

Rivals and seniors to look up to
I have friends alongside me
And a coach harboring the same dream lighting the way.
That's why...!

I WON'T CLOSE MY EYES
AND I'LL MUSTER MY COURAGE!

IF I DO THAT
I'LL FIND MY WAY!

HM... WELL, I SUPPOSE YOU PASS.


THAT WAS THE EFFECT OF YOUR CONCENTRATION ON THE VERGE OF DEATH.
JUST NOW... IT WAS LIKE TIME SLOWED DOWN...

DID YOU SEE A FEW FLASHES FROM YOUR PAST?
I DID! CLEARLY!! THEY EVEN SPOKE!
AS I THOUGHT, YOU'RE BUT HALF A STEP AWAY FROM SETTING FOOT INTO THE DOMAIN OF THE "GOD EYE". YOUR PREVIOUS TRAINING HELPED, BUT I SUSPECT YOUR TUTELAGE UNDER IRENE HAD A PART AS WELL.

HOHO! IF YOU HADN'T DODGED, I'D BE A CRIMINAL RIGHT ABOUT NOW~
HEAD INSTRUCTOR! YOU REALLY WERE PLANNING TO HIT ME!?
HM...? "THE VERGE OF DEATH"... MEANS...
?
IF YOU ABANDONED YOUR LIMITS AND STRUCK WITH ACCURACY BORN OF THE "GOD EYE", IT COULD BECOME QUITE THE WEAPON FOR YOU.
KNOWING THAT, WILL YOU STILL CONTINUE DOWN THE PATH OF THE UNARMED FIGHTER?
IF YOU LACK THAT RESOLVE, YOU WILL EXPERIENCE DEATH. PERHAPS NOT YOUR BODY IN A MATCH, BUT THE LOSS WOULD CLEAVE ITS WAY TO YOUR HEART.
BUT THAT WOULD REQUIRE THE RESOLVE TO CONSTANTLY STAND AT THE BRINK OF DEATH.

AND I'LL CONTINUE TO ENGRAVE IT IN MY HEART... TAKING THIS PATH TO BECOME STRONGER!

HEAD INSTRUCTOR. I WILL TAKE THIS LESSON YOU PROVIDED IN PREPARING FOR DEATH TO HEART.

YES SIR!
I'LL CONTINUE TO WATCH OVER YOUR JOURNEY DOWN THIS PATH OF "MARTIAL ARTS" WITH GREAT INTEREST.
TECHNIQUES FOR THE WEAK TO FIGHT AGAINST THE STRONG... THAT IS THE TRUE PATH OF "MARTIAL ARTS".

R... RIGHT!
AH, BY THE WAY, I'D PREFER IF WE KEPT WHAT JUST OCCURRED A SECRET FROM NOVE-SENSEI AND MY GRANDDAUGHTERS. THEY'D BE FURIOUS.

VIVID CHAPTER 80 CREDITS

TRANSLATOR: KINSEI
RAWS: CRAZY HAT
PROOFREADERS: KIRA WING, CTHULHUDPC
TYPESETTERS: SETSUNA F. SEIEI, YASHAMON
QUALITY CHECKER: SETSUNA F. SEIEI
PROJECT LEADER: PRIMESONIC
SAINT KING: SATSUKI TAKAHASHI
SPECIAL THANKS: TORI KARAAGE

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